

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for operating a shelf, ~~preferably in a commissioning system, comprising:~~

providing with a shelf (1) one or more shelves and [[an]] one or more mechanically coupled and longitudinally adjustable associated storage and retrieval units [[(2)]] for retrieving and introducing containers [[(3)]], trays or the like from or into [[the]] one or more shelf shelves; wherein

providing [[a]] height areas of the shelf (1) defined between one shelf and another shelf having a plurality of shelf levels, said shelf levels being (a, b, c, d) arranged one on top of another and can be operated operating as [[an]] independent shelf units; (I, H, HH and IV) and

by means of at least one, mechanically coupled and longitudinally adjustable storage and retrieval unit (2), and at least two independent shelf units (I, H, HH and IV) are provided; characterized in that the storage and retrieval unit (2) is transferred vertically transferring said storage and retrieval units from one [[said]] or more independent shelf units (I, H, H or IV) into another one or more other independent shelf units (HH, H, IV or I, HH, IV or I, H, IV or I, H, HH) of the same shelf [[(1)]] or of another [[said]] shelf [[(1')]].

2. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said storage and retrieval unit [[(2)]] is transferred into another [[said]] shelf unit, which does not yet have a storage and retrieval unit of the same type.

3. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim 1 ~~or 2, characterized in that~~ wherein said storage and retrieval unit [(2)] is transported vertically by means of a vertical elevator [(4)] from one said shelf unit into another said shelf unit.

4. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with ~~one of the claims 1 through 3~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said storage and retrieval unit [(2)] is displaced horizontally from one said shelf [(1)] to another said shelf [(1')] preferably in a height position [(h)] located at a spaced location from [the] a shelf bottom on a horizontal path [(6)] between the shelves (1, 1').

5. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with claim [(5)] 4, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said horizontal path [(6)] is displaced vertically.

6. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with ~~one of the claims 1 through 5~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that a~~ wherein said storage and retrieval unit [(2)], which is vertically extensible, is brought into a compact, flat, withdrawn position [(K)] before transfer.

7. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with ~~one of the claims 1 through 6~~ claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein before transfer, said storage and retrieval unit [(2)] is equipped with containers [(3)] or trays, which are transferred together with said storage and retrieval unit and are introduced or, ~~conversely~~, released after transferring said storage and

5 retrieval unit in the other shelf unit.

8. (Currently Amended) A method in accordance with ~~one of the claims 1 through 6~~  
claim 1, characterized in that wherein said storage and retrieval unit [(2)] is equipped with  
[[said]] containers [(3)] or trays in [[the]] another shelf unit after transfer, [[the]] said  
containers [(3)] or trays to be introduced being transported by means of separate conveying  
5 means and being taken over by said storage and retrieval unit [(2)] for introduction into [[the]]  
another shelf unit or ~~being, conversely,~~ released in [[the]] another shelf unit only.

9. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system for operating a shelf; ~~preferably~~  
~~in a commissioning system~~; for carrying out the method in accordance with ~~one of the claims~~  
~~1 through 8~~; claim 1 comprising: wherein

one or more shelves;  
5 one or more storage and retrieval units for retrieving and introducing containers, trays  
or the like from or into one or more shelves;

a height area of [[the]] one or more shelves shelf(2) having a plurality of shelf levels  
(a, b, c, d) arranged one on top of another, said plurality of shelf levels operating can be  
operated as an independent shelf unit (I, II, III, IV) by means of at least one[[.]] mechanically  
10 coupled and longitudinally adjustable storage and retrieval unit [(2),]; and

~~characterized in that~~ a transferring device [[with]] having at least one vertical elevator  
[[ (4) ]]-~~is provided~~ for transferring [[the]] said storage and retrieval unit [(2)] from one or

more [[said]] shelf units (I, H, HH or IV) into ~~another said one or more other~~ shelf units (H, HH, IV or I, HH, IV or I, H, IV or I, H, HH) of the [[said]] same shelf [[(1)]] or of another [[said]] shelf [[(1')]].

10. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with claim 9, characterized in that wherein said vertical elevator [[(4)]] is arranged in [[the]] an area of one said a longitudinal end of [[the]] a shelf [[(1)]].

11. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with claim 9 or 10, characterized in that wherein said vertical elevator [[(4)]] has holding and fixing means for a storage and retrieval unit [[(2)], ~~which is to be received and to be vertically displaced~~ the vertical elevator receiving said storage and retrieval unit and vertically displacing said storage and retrieval unit.

12. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with claim 10, characterized in that wherein said vertical elevator [[(4)]] and/or each longitudinal end of each said shelf unit (I, H, HH, IV) facing the vertical elevator has locking means, ~~which blocks~~ for blocking a shelf unit [[(2)]] in relation to the vertical elevator [[(4)]] for safely receiving a storage and retrieval unit in the shelf unit when the vertical elevator is being operated in another height position.

13. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with ~~one of the~~  
claims 9 through 12 claim 9, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ said vertical elevator ~~[[ (4) ]]~~  
comprises an elevator cage ~~[[ (4') ]]~~ for receiving a storage and retrieval unit ~~[[ (2) ]]~~, said cage  
which ~~can be~~ being vertically displaced ~~vertically~~ between at least two said shelf units ~~(I, H, HH,~~  
5 ~~IV)~~ arranged one on top of another and ~~can be~~ positioned at ~~[[ the ]]~~ a level of the shelf units.

14. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with ~~one of the~~  
claims 9 through 13 claim 9, ~~characterized in that further comprising~~ at least ~~[[ one ]]~~ another  
transport elevator ~~(5)~~ is provided for ~~[[ the ]]~~ separate transport of containers ~~[[ (3) ]]~~ or trays,  
which said elevator is preferably being located at one longitudinal end of the shelf ~~[[ (1) ]]~~.

15. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with ~~one of the~~  
claims 9 through 14 claim 9, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ a horizontal path ~~[[ (6) ]]~~ is provided;  
on which the for horizontally displacing said storage and retrieval unit ~~(2)~~ can be displaced  
horizontally between the shelves from one said shelf ~~[[ (1) ]]~~ to another said shelf ~~[[ (1') ]]~~  
5 preferably in a height position ~~[[ (h) ]]~~ located at a spaced location from ~~[[ the ]]~~ a shelf bottom  
or the horizontal path ~~[[ (6) ]]~~ can be displaced horizontally together with the storage and  
retrieval unit ~~[[ (2) ]]~~.

16. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with claim 15,  
characterized in that wherein said horizontal path ~~[[ (6) ]]~~ is adjustable in height.

17. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with ~~one of the claims 9 through 16~~ claim 9, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ said storage and retrieval unit ~~[(2)]~~ has a lower and/or upper longitudinal chassis ~~(12, 13)~~, ~~which are~~ displaceable along a shelf front in a nontilting manner in fixed horizontal rails ~~[(10)]~~ in ~~[(the)]~~ levels of said shelf units ~~(1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)~~.  
5 ~~11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)~~.

18. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with claim 17, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ said storage and retrieval unit ~~(2)~~ ~~has~~ having a vertical mast ~~(24)~~ with an upper and lower chassis ~~(12, 13)~~, wherein a height-adjustable load receiving means ~~[(7)]~~ for ~~[(said)]~~ containers ~~[(3)]~~ or trays is provided along the vertical mast ~~[(24)]~~.

19. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with claim 18, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ said vertical mast ~~[(24)]~~ has an articulated joint ~~(20)~~, ~~which permits~~ permitting deflection of the mast in ~~[(the)]~~ a direction of longitudinal displacement ~~[(L)]~~, the articulated joint being ~~preferably~~ provided in ~~[(the)]~~ an area of the upper chassis ~~[(12)]~~ of the storage and retrieval unit ~~[(2)]~~.  
5 ~~[(12)]~~ of the storage and retrieval unit ~~[(2)]~~.

20. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with claim 18 or 19, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ said vertical mast ~~[(24)]~~ extends over the height of a shelf unit ~~(1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16)~~.

21. (Currently Amended) A storage and retrieval system in accordance with ~~one of the~~  
claims 9 through 17 claim 9, ~~characterized in that a~~ wherein said storage and retrieval unit  
[[ (2) ]], which ~~can be extended vertically~~ is vertically extendable, is provided with a height-  
adjustable lifting table, said storage and retrieval unit being (6) ~~and can be~~ withdrawn into a  
compact, flat position [[ (K) ]] before a transfer, ~~is provided~~.